



## CETT sustainability: highlights and progress



*Students in a CETT classroom in El Salvador*

Planning for sustainability has been an integral part of the Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT) project. As the project approaches the final stages as a wholly-funded USAID pilot effort, the subject is drawing further attention. This issue takes a closer look at some CETT sustainability accomplishments.

Over the last decades, interest in sustainability has grown considerably among international development actors, policy makers, and social scientists alike. There are a number of definitions for this concept (see for instance Goodland, 2002). A large body of literature discusses the principle of sustainability in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as they increasingly become a major vehicle through which aid is channeled to developing nations. For NGOs, sustainability relates to the challenges of securing and managing resources while decreasing reliance on any single funding source (see for instance Pathfinder International n.d.; Devine, 2003; Abt Associates, n.d.). When it comes to the sustainability of international development initiatives, the term generally refers to the continued flow of development activity benefits to intended populations beyond the completion of a project (Sclafani, 2000). Sustainability is also seen as an important element in efforts to scale up development successes.

For education initiatives, as for projects in other sectors, sustainability takes different forms and cuts across a number of dimensions. The narrow view of sustainability rests predominantly on financial considerations (Devine, 2003). In other words, it focuses on securing the financial resources needed to fund a project after primary donor funding is withdrawn.

As mentioned above, financial sustainability can be supported by moving to a more diversified funding portfolio.

The CETTs are actively involved in efforts to ensure the financial sustainability of the project. In some countries the model has been institutionalized by the Ministry of Education and is being expanded nationwide. In others, as the project continues to effect lasting change, it has attracted other donors with shared goals. The CETTs are actively engaged in sustainability-related activities and are in the process of mapping out potential funding sources as well as promoting activities to further raise the profile of the project within, across, and beyond CETT countries. The challenge lies in continuing to make positive strides in this area.

While there is no doubt that financial resources are vital to sustain any activity, there are other aspects equally important for a project's continuity and growth. The notion of sustainability also rests on social considerations (Meza et al., 2004; Devine, 2003). Community participation in education projects is one of the driving forces of social sustainability. Participation helps develop a sense of ownership, which increases the community's stake in a particular project as well as its commitment to see it succeed. It can also ease resistance to change and generate local leadership and support to the effort, both of which serve as powerful forces to achieve social sustainability. The EDUCO program, initially funded by the World Bank and later institutionalized by the Ministry of Education in El Salvador (Meza et al., 2004), and CEDPA's New Horizons Education program, funded by USAID/Egypt (CEDPA, 2004), are examples of education projects involving community participation that achieved good results in this area.

From the start, social sustainability has been a core concern for the CETT project and has become one of its major strengths. The project is hosted, managed, and implemented by universities and institutions, drawing on local teams to lead and carry out the effort. This has built know-how at the local level, and contributed to a strong sense of ownership. By empowering trainers and teachers to become agents of change, the CETTs have facilitated a process of transformation. The training inspires teachers to become innovative while strengthening their ability to deliver quality literacy instruction to children in first through third grades. To the extent that parents and communities in general are involved in successful education services that enjoy credibility, they become stakeholders engaged in ensuring that those services remain over time. Further harnessing the potential of parents, school principals, trainers, trainees, and CETT teacher alumni to become a voice for the project is an important opportunity for the CETTs in the path to sustainability. (*Continues on pp. 4...*)

## ANDES

### Bolivia: NUR University leadership transforms education

Through an inter-institutional agreement, Nur University, in collaboration with the Multiethnic Technical School of Eastern and Chaco Regions (INSPOC), and the Enrique Finot Technical Schools in Santa Cruz and Portachuelo, offered seminars and workshops to local teachers. These events, held January 19-28, provided local teachers with an opportunity to learn about the CETT experience, themes and practices designed to improve teacher training through specialized curriculum. Topics covered during these sessions included: educational leadership, alphabetic principle, reading comprehension, and the production of texts.

Participants stated that they found the strategies in the workshop both innovative and applicable, and expressed their commitment to apply these new strategies in the classroom.

For more information about the Andean CETT activities in Bolivia, please visit [www.cecmmnur.org](http://www.cecmmnur.org)

### Sustainability through individual action

Carla Gradiz, CETT Teacher in Honduras



*"CETT trainers who visit and support me in the classroom have taught me to meet the diverse needs of the children, and gradually abandon my previously rigid and monotonous teaching practices. Now I collaborate with CETT trainers to assist new teachers in the program in my community and I am very happy about that. I must say that I am more motivated to innovate my teaching and my students are the happiest children in school. I am very proud of them because they have become real writers and authors; I must also confess that I am proud of my own improvement."*

## CETT CA-RD

### PUCMM-CETT promotes community participation



*Participants in a CETT reading fair*

In the Dominican Republic, the CETT has been organizing several reading fairs in the different public schools supported by the project. The purpose of these fairs is to "foster in the students, parents and the community at large a passion and a special interest in reading and the creative production of various types of texts."

The fairs offer several educational activities, including exhibits of students' work, a storytelling corner, a news corner, and displays of children's books. In addition, the fairs feature art workshops intended to develop the creative and artistic abilities of students. Parents have also benefited from these events participating in activities specially designed for them. The purpose of the activities for parents is to encourage them to collaborate with teachers in developing their children's reading skills.

The reading fairs have generated a lot of enthusiasm in the students and have had a positive impact on teachers, students, and families according to evidence and comments shared by participants.

For more information, contact Liliana Montenegro ([lmontenegro@pucmmsti.edu.do](mailto:lmontenegro@pucmmsti.edu.do))

### From the classroom: Andes

*"An example is worth a thousand words, so I try to reflect in my work the change I am trying to convey to my colleagues. Peer visits and internships are an excellent way to reach them through practice [...], this marks the real difference between the Andean CETT and other training programs..."*

**Ñatita**, CETT teacher in Bolivia

*"The Andean CETT has not only improved my professional practice and that of my colleagues, it also positively impacts hundreds, thousands of students each year."*

**Natalia Alfaro**, CETT teacher in Peru

## CETT CA-RD

**Guatemala: Creative classrooms capture national attention**



*Students in a CETT classroom in Guatemala*

In CETT schools in Guatemala, desks are not aligned, students talk more than the teachers, reading is not a punishment but rather a reward, and other subjects revolve around it. The CETT project, supported by USAID and the Universidad del Valle in Guatemala, is forming a new generation of readers and writers, children who love reading and writing and are not afraid to express themselves.

The project is also producing a new generation of motivated and innovative teachers. During the training sessions teachers learn to break with traditional paradigms, and particularly, to use reading and writing in all other subjects. They use it in Math and Social Science classes and there are always reading assignments each day. The project also develops teachers' creativity. In the words of a first grade CETT teacher, the project "helps motivate teachers to improve."

The project started four years ago and the results are already visible in the schools served by the initiative.

(This is a summary of the article published in El Periódico, a prominent newspaper in Guatemala. For the full article, go to <http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20090215/domingo/90999>)

### **Communicating Results and Sustainability International Workshop**

CETT CA-RD representatives attended this workshop held in Mexico City, D.F., Mexico on February 16 and 17. The overall objective of the workshop was to strengthen technical personnel's skills to enhance sustainability and expansion efforts in their respective countries. Topics covered included the development of sustainability plans, techniques for communicating results, and technical proposal writing. The event also provided a forum to discuss and plan future actions in the area of sustainability.

## C-CETT

**C-CETT expands reach through government leadership**

The Caribbean CETT was designed in the initial project years FY02-FY06, for implementation in 68 primary schools in 5 countries in the English-speaking Caribbean. During Phase II, FY06-FY09, the program expanded to 208 schools in 8 countries namely, Belize, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. Benefitting in Phase II are 22,053 primary school students, with over 2000 'in-service' and 3000 'pre-service' primary school teachers receiving training. By September 2009, when the project ends, an additional 5 English-speaking countries will have officially anchored, and benefitted from the C-CETT. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat recently commended USAID/Jamaica for the impact it has made on literacy through the Caribbean CETT. Their Ministers of Education attending the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of OECS Ministers in Grenada in March 2008 "were high in praise for the impressive achievement as shown in post-test data for 2004-2006. Also remarkable is the significant number of schools, teachers and students that have benefitted from this intervention." With additional financial intervention in FY09, five more OECS countries will benefit from the C-CETT.

This, the final year of the project, will witness the institutionalization of the Caribbean CETT in the Primary Teacher Education Programs of the four (4) Regulatory Authorities for Teacher Education in the Caribbean; the Units and Literacy Centers in the Colleges and the Joint Board of Teacher Education, which manages the C-CETT. There will also be the continued expansion of the Business Partners Membership (14 to date) to facilitate documentation, recording and publicizing of Caribbean CETT results; and the marketing of the JBTE Foundation and the C-CETT to Development Banks, Donor Agencies and the Caribbean Union of Teachers.

(Contribution by Yvonne Coore Johnson, USAID/Jamaica, in collaboration with Delroy Alleyne, C-CETT)

### **Other significant accomplishments**

- Peru CETT's Partnership Challenge Fund attracts new private partners Natura and Business for Education (ExE).
- C-CETT signs MOU with DHL supporting delivery of Scholastic books to schools.
- The Government of the Dominican Republic is in the process of expanding the CETT model nationwide.
- CETT in Honduras is in the early stages of implementing the model across the country after an agreement with the Ministry of Education, signed September 10, 2008.



It should be noted that in some countries the teams and institutions are employing very creative ideas to this end, including setting up alumni networks, organizing reading fairs, and carrying out literacy marches.

Finally, the notion of sustainability also rests on political considerations (Devine, 2003). This is especially true in a scenario of institutionalization of a particular project by government agencies. This requires leadership and commitment of political will (and financial resources) on the part of authorities at the municipal, state and/or federal levels. As a pilot project, CETT has been insulated from politics to some extent, but this is changing rapidly in certain countries as they move toward institutionalization at the national level, and in others as they seek political support at the local level to continue working in targeted communities. While commitment of political will can play a key role in contributing to sustainability, it also brings with it a level of instability inherent in the nature of politics. It will be vital for the CETTs to devise strategies to ensure survival of the initiative through political transitions.

As mentioned above, sustainability is a multi-dimensional and multi-faceted concept. It is also an on-going process. For the CETTs, given that participating countries are at different stages and facing unique challenges, this process consists of defining and redefining "sustainability," as well as devising contextualized strategies to build upon and sustain the project's development successes.

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## **EDITOR'S NOTE**

USAID recognizes that, while the three Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT) have much in common, distance and time makes it difficult to remain in contact with each other. It is for this reason that USAID has contracted the Aguirre Division of JBS International to produce this quarterly bulletin. The purpose of the CETT Bulletin is to share ideas of importance and interest in order to foster greater communication and understanding in the CETT community.

To submit items to the Bulletin, please e-mail [fmillan@jbsinternational.com](mailto:fmillan@jbsinternational.com)

Because the Bulletin is internal to the CETT community, we will draw from a diverse array of CETT sources for materials. Submission may come from Reading Specialists/Trainers, PIU staff, the Executive Committee members, or CETT staff members, discussing issues as seen "on the ground." This edition focuses on a main theme for both the feature article and news pieces. We hope it will be useful to all three CETTs and will spark discussion within and among the different centers.